



rivers&trails

National
Park
Service



rivers, trails, and conservation assistance program

YUMA CROSSING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Project Goals

- To develop the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (NHA) plan;
- To develop the Yuma Crossing NHA management entity, and;
- To implement early action projects to build momentum for the overall project.

Background

Yuma sits on the banks of the Colorado River in southwestern Arizona. Yuma Crossing is located at two massive formations of granite outcroppings, which have been used to support methods for crossing the Colorado River since prehistoric times. Native Americans, Spanish Conquistadors, gold rush prospectors, western settlers and contemporary travelers all used the crossing area to expand their mobility westward.

Sea captains and ferrymen made their trade in this bustling river town. Miners, merchants, soldiers and farmers came to make their fortunes, and in some cases lose them, too. Yuma has four National Historic Landmarks representing some of the rich history of the place. All are contained within the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, designated October 2000.

Proximity to water and the rich river soils deposited on the flat lands provide abundant cropland in an otherwise desert region. Riparian habitat and recreation opportunities also abound and will be a major theme of the National Heritage Area planning process.

The historic Molina Block, located within the National Heritage Area, links NHA sites with the new Municipal Government Complex and other parts of the revitalized downtown area.

Since 1984, the Yuma community has been working together on a successive master planning process. Consistent and widespread community involvement has contributed to City Strategic Plans and the Yuma Historic Downtown Vision 2020.

Today, Yuma is ready to conserve, promote, and celebrate its new National Heritage Area with residence, and visitors from around the country and around the world.

National Park Service Role

The National Park Service has been authorized to support Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area in a number of ways. Recreation, parks and river trails are prominent themes of the Yuma Crossing NHA and make a natural fit for NPS's Rivers and Trails and Conservation Assistance work. RTCA staff in Arizona will provide assistance to the NHA planning process and development of the Yuma Crossing NHA management entity.

Yuma, 1909



continued

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Project Results to Date

- Congressional designation of Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area.
- 17 acres of reclaimed landfill planted with trees to create a community riverfront park.
- 2 miles of trail developed at East Wetlands area.

Project Partners

- City of Yuma – staff, community and political support for planning and implementation.
- US Fish & Wildlife Service – habitat restoration planning and advice.
- AZ State Historic Preservation Office – restoration and preservation planning, for National Landmark sites and the historic Molina Block area.
- Bureau of Reclamation – flood control and river park planning assistance.

Main Street Parade Celebrating Construction of the Laguna Dam, 1909



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Quartermaster Depot on Colorado River, Late 1800s

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